

Preschool for All (PFA)

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

OVERVIEW

Preschool for All is one of two programs funded under the Early Childhood Block Grant, the purpose of which is to provide high quality preschool, including comprehensive developmental screening, bachelors-level early childhood licensed teachers, and standards-aligned research-based curriculum.

The Preschool for All program focuses on providing high-quality educational programs for children ages 3 to 5 years who are determined to be at risk of academic failure as indicated by their families' high levels of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, limited-English proficiency, or other need-related indicators.

A program serving "primarily at-risk children" is one that: A) has 80 percent or more of the enrolled children identified as being at risk of academic failure B) gives priority for enrollment to students identified as academically at risk over those students who have not been identified as academically at risk; and C) has taken specific proactive measures to ensure that parents of children who may be at risk of academic failure are aware of the opportunity to enroll in the preschool education program. For more information: <http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/235ARK.pdf>

WHO IS SERVED?

Population(s)/Age Group:

Children ages 3 to 5 years old

Eligibility Criteria and Screening Tools:

The first priority for a PFA program is to serve those children who have been determined to be at risk of academic failure as indicated by their families' high levels of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, limited-English proficiency, or other need-related indicators.

PFA programs develop weighted criteria based upon the risk factors noted above, the risk factors present in the community, and those factors identified by research as causing children and families to be at risk.

Screening instruments and activities must relate to and measure the child's development in these specific areas: vocabulary, visual-motor integration, language and speech development, English proficiency, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and cognitive development. All screening procedures must include a parent interview (to be conducted in the parents' home/native language, if necessary) and both a vision and hearing screening.

HOW ARE SERVICES DELIVERED?

Local Service System

PFA programs are located in public schools, child care centers, and other settings such as community-based organizations. A list of PFA programs with contact information is available at <http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/directories.htm>.

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Referrals into Program

Preschool for All programs actively seek out and identify children who may be eligible for the program and complete individual child screenings. In most communities, an annual community-wide screening is conducted as a collaborative effort by the PFA program, Child Find, and other community partners.

Data Systems Used

Student Information System (SIS)

STATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR OR CONTACT

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Program Website:
<http://isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/default.htm#imp>